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THE SUDAN TO-DAY AND TO-MORROW

By Herbert L. Bridgman

The Sudan which was, which is, and which is to be, each claims our attention. The purpose of the hour is briefly to set forth some of the characteristics and opportunities of this portion of the earth, surrounded now, as in the past by twilight and uncertainty. It is but the plain tale of an American newspaper man, with no obligations to anybody or to anything but to see the truth and to tell it as he saw it, supplemented and, perhaps, reinforced by the recent official reports of the Governor-General, the Provincial Governors, the missionary societies, the university which bears the name of Africa's savior and other official and semi-official information.

It is distinctly not the purpose to enter upon a political, social or economic discussion. That has already been done by an American ex-President, and his words, uttered in Cairo and in London, have been heard around the world, and their echoes are not yet stilled. It is, perhaps, not only becoming but appropriate to say that from the Anglo-Saxon, constitutional government point of view, it is quite impossible to see how his deductions and conclusions, whether his method of imparting and of enforcing them be accepted, could have been other than they were.

Summed up in a word, and with no other than the strict scientific terminology, reduced to the language of plain men, the condition of Egypt and its dependant province, the Sudan, is simply that of a bankrupt, broken-down concern which, having borrowed all that it could and about defaulting upon its interest, its chief creditor has taken over, with the purpose of maintaining it as a going concern until his investment can be repaid. That the creditor should prefer, while he has this duty and responsibility, to employ his own

watchmen and workmen, at least so far as positions of chief command are concerned, is but the dictate of experience, of international law and of common sense. That no other condition would be tolerable, even practicable, is axiomatic. Until young Egypt is much farther along the road of self-control, of effective administration, of popular education, in short, until its electorate has been raised many degrees in the scale and some idea of the doctrines of constitutional government has been appreciated and assimilated, anarchy would be the inevitable alternative, and to surrender the control to the conditions which now exist would be an open invitation and a short road to political chaos and industrial and commercial ruin.

We balk at Philippine independence to-day: Egyptian self-government is but an iridescent dream and must continue to be until by the slow processes of development the electorate has been enlightened and elevated to meet the responsibilities of a free and self-governing people.

The Sudan of the past begins far beyond definite historic knowledge. An Arab word meaning black, it is easy to see that in the beginning the Sudan might have included all the descendants of the eldest brother of the three who peopled the earth. Should we raise the curtain upon the prelude of our drama within well-known historic times, we should disclose the Queen of Sheba at the court of Solomon, perhaps wearing gold ornaments from the the Om Nabardi mines in her domains, which the English capitalists are now working with satisfactory results, while just over the eastern border of the Sudan, Menelik, her lineal descendant as he claims, if he still be living—for his death or report of his death, is of frequent, almost daily occurrence—holds aloft the banner of the lion of the tribe of Judah and guards zealously the faith and the traditions of his illustrious ancestors.

It is not easy to speak of the Sudan in terms of geographic and statistical accuracy. A recent Standard cyclopedia states that the Nile traverses it for a thousand miles, and that it has a population of "several millions." As its longitude data contain nearly 100 per cent of error it is possible that those of population may be somewhat out of the way. Only

a few months ago was the Abyssinian boundary of the Sudan definitely delimited, and on the west, where France is advancing its flag is a zone, not well defined, but by no means neutral where the dervishes and slavetraders of Darfur dispute the jurisdiction of all Europeans. As for the present population of the Sudan, the latest official estimates place it "at two and a half millions," probably a gain of more than 50 per cent since the fall of El Khalifa.

Between the first and the second cataract of the Nile, the steamer ties up for the night at Abu-Simbel, under the colossal sandstone statues of Rameses II, erect and fallen, fronting the funereal mortuary chambers, which may be readily explored by the electric light, installed by thoughtful hands for the convenience of the tourist, while not far to the eastward of one of the southern reaches of the railway, constructed as a military weapon and now maintained and operated as a servant of a rapidly growing commerce, are the ruins of the Roman temples of Mereowe, visible on a clear afternoon as the train speeds on toward Khartoum, the capital.

Later, a thousand years almost, than the Romans, came the Arabs, with keen foresight, establishing at the junction of the White and the Blue Nile, Khartoum, the city to be the centre of so much that was important and dramatic in the history of the valley and of the continent. It would be profitless to rehearse in detail, or to undertake to recite the medieval, even the recent history of the upper provinces; how Egyptian authority, like the tides of the sea, advanced and receded, and sometimes reaching far to the source of the Nile, sometimes blocked and dammed at the first cataract; how even until almost the close of the nineteenth century—but a quarter of a century ago—the age-long forces grappled in a death struggle for the mastery. It seems but yesterday that El Mahdi, like a fiery scourge, swept through the Sudan and threatened Egypt, Cairo, and in his vaunting and frenzied ambition, even the throne of England itself.

It is wholly unnecessary to relate what no one can have forgotten—the heroic struggle, the glorious, barbarous death of Gordon, the long decade of darkness and blackness

which followed, the dauntless, determined assault year after year of Kitchener, until at last the crowning victory, the recapture of the capital, the flight of the Calipha and the remnant of his army, and the restoration of law, order and civilization was accomplished. A year later the last remnant of armed resistance was crushed; when the Calipha, surrounded by a handful of followers was removed, the sanguinary drama was ended and the long night of the province was over. From Kerreri and the fall of Omdurman, September 2, 1898, may be dated the history of the new Sudan. In the years to come, when the province shall choose its national day of commemoration—its birthday, as we the Fourth of July—the day of Kerreri and of the flight of the Calipha will be one of the red letter days on its calendar.

The Sudan, to-day, therefore, is just a dozen years old, an exceedingly brief time in the history of a nation. What has been accomplished it is not difficult to state, and it is also, perhaps, significant that the achievements in the Sudan both demonstrate the wonderful facility and expedition of modern methods in civilization and indicate in some degree what may be the future development of the province. It would be interesting, if one had the time to compare, for example, the first twelve years of any or of all of our North American colonies with the first twelve of the Sudan, and see in how much greater ratio has been the gain in population, in commerce and in agriculture, and in all that goes to make a nation. Steam, electricity and all the modern improvements have been utilized to the fullest extent, enforced and directed, too, by a central, superior, political power which has apparently demonstrated advantages over the personal and the individual method. If one were to survey the Sudan at the re-conquest of Khartoum, only a devastated, almost a depopulated province would have been seen. "Our tears were drops of blood," said an Arab woman to me at Omdurman. Hundreds of villages were destroyed, large sections of the country were almost depopulated, agriculture, a lost art, and, in fact, fire and sword had done their complete work, and ruin and desolation were everywhere.

The first year of British administration the total revenues of the province were but half a million dollars. Last year they were more than ten times that amount, a fact which in itself condenses and at the same time elucidates that which might occupy much more space. The military railway was, of course, in operation, such as it was, partially equipped solely for the use of the army and mails, with no commercial functions whatever, and with a scattered, indifferent and ineffective river service. To-day, the railway from Wadi Halfa to Khartoum has been practically reconstructed, a line extended to the southeast 190 miles to Sennar where it will turn to the westward, crossing the Nile into the great province of Kordofan, and so bring into commercial relations the fertile and ultimately prolific province of the Gezireh, which occupies the great triangle between the White and the Blue Nile. Other extensions of the railway in the Dongola province have also been constructed, and more important than all, the line has been opened from Atbara, near the crossing of the river of that name to the new Port Sudan, on the Red Sea, where direct connection has been made with the commerce of the world. Indeed, Port Sudan, is already beginning to make itself and its influence felt in the commerce of the near East. By it and its breakwater and other improvements upon which five millions of dollars have been expended the Sudan is made absolutely independent of Egypt; can receive and deliver its commerce with the whole world without crossing territory other than its own, a strategic position which some day may come to be of the very first importance. Some of the most important factors which go to make up the commercial development, the present assets of the Sudan, may be gathered from the last annual report of the Governor-General, Sir Reginald Wingate, as follows:

Increase of land tilled, 433,000 acres, of which 133,000 flood cultivation, 313,000 more rain cultivation.

Exports, Millet, 1906	\$40,000
First nine months, 1909	\$640,000
Ratio of working expense, Sudan government Railway	
'09, 78; ratio of working expense, '05, 68.	

Exports, 1909.....	\$2,819,000	
Exports, 1908.....	2,065,000	
Increase over 1908.....	\$754,000	
To Egypt, 1909.....	1,660,000	
To Egypt, 1908.....	1,196,000	
Increase over 1908.....	\$464,000	
Imports—Sugar, 9,337 tons; salt, 2,066 tons; petroleum, 1,017 tons; cotton stuffs, 2,703 tons.		
Exports—Gum, 13,847 tons; dura, 31,212 tons; simsin, 6,334 tons.		
Revenue, '10 exclusive of contribution from Egyptian government (estimated).....	\$5,493,000	
Revenue, '09	5,063,000	
Revenue, '09, land tax	609,000	
railways.....	1,675,000	
steamers	655,000	
posts and telegrams.....	234,000	
customs	337,500	
Total	\$3,510,500	
Postal pieces.....	5,189,000	
Money orders.....	8,365,000	
Parcels posts, C. O. D., '09, 20,000.....	135,000	
Parcels posts, C. O. D., '10, 11, 000.....	975,000	
	1910	1911
Pupils in kuttabs (native schools)	2,123	1,781

Already the foundations of a constitutional government have been laid, and in the Governor-General's Council, modeled on that of India, whence many of the ideas and the men of Anglo-Africa have been drawn, established last year, and handling in a limited and secondary manner, it is true, the budget and all credits, proposed laws and regulations and other administrative matters, which the Governor-General or any Provincial Governor may desire to submit, are the beginnings of the future Parliament of the Sudan.

The interesting, often fascinating, history of the Sudan, half legendary and all dramatic, should, however, be regarded as effect rather than cause. The cause persists and will continue to persist so long as the earth, certainly so long as the continent of Africa, endures. It is not too much to say that the Sudan is the strategic key of Africa; to change the figure, that it is the keystone of the arch of British supremacy. It

is not, perhaps, necessary, certainly not intended to encumber memory with figures and details, with miles and degrees and other things in statistics. Perhaps the relative situation and the possibility of the Sudan may be understood by a geographical parallel, as it were. Imagine Khartoum super-posed on our American St. Louis. If the likeness must be more exact, place it at the junction of the Mississippi and the Ohio, and you have a fair reproduction of its relation to Africa. From the mountains of Abyssinia, the Blue Nile comes down as the Ohio from Pittsburg, and from the far distant Lake Victoria to the south, flows the White Nile, as the Missouri from Montana and the country to the far northwest. One hundred and ninety miles below Khartoum throw off to the deep sea a railway as one might to Charleston or Savannah, the distance, however, reduced one-half, and does it need either a prophetic or a strategic eye to see that the power which holds these lines of water and rail communication controls the destiny of the continent?

Emphasizing this control, too, is the fact that the Nile receives, north of Khartoum, no affluent of consequence, so that the power of controlling the Sudan controls not only the travel, the traffic, the access and the transportation between all Eastern and Central Africa and the world, but also, the water, the life blood upon which Egypt exists. In other words, the Sudan is undisputed mistress of the Nile valley, with its waterway to the heart of the continent and all that that implies—a strategic advantage against which no power could possibly contend.

The explanation of the present condition of the progress and the promise in the Sudan is not far to seek. The policy of Lord Cromer in Egypt was to administer the affairs of the country as those of a going concern; to preserve law and order; to stimulate industry and protection, and as a means to that end, to enforce honesty in public affairs; to stop corruption, grafting and incompetency; to give the best possible administration, irrespective of any other consideration than the object to be gained, which was public order and public credit. These same methods have been transferred and made vigorously effective in the Sudan. Nominally, of course, nothing

else could have been, since the Sudan is a province of Egypt, and Sir Reginald Wingate, holding at the same time the title of "sirdar," or commander-in-chief of the Egyptian army, has his headquarters at Khartoum, and there exercises his functions of command, but while the military is ostensibly in full and unlimited authority, it is really an accessory to the civil power and almost solely for police purposes. The spirit of the British administration of the Sudan has been from the beginning one of intelligent, enlightened coöperation with the inhabitants, inviting them to positions of official responsibility and trust, and, on the other hand, protecting them in all the private vocations and pursuits.

But the ravage and the ruin of war were only the superficial problem. The real trouble lay deeper. No such thing as self-respectful, self-sustaining wage-earning work had ever been known in the Sudan. Labor and slavery were synonymous; commerce in the staples and necessities of life had never been known. Articles of luxury, ivory, feathers, gum, a few of the choice woods, gold itself, for which the market was world-wide, and in the same catalogue slaves, were the only commerce which the Sudan had for centuries known. Therefore, the task which confronted the British administrators and the commercial civilization, the economic and industrial order which they sought to introduce must place its foundation far down at the very bottom and beginning of things,—a generation of laborers must be raised. Religious opposition to characteristics widely different between the Christian and the Mohammedan faiths was also an adverse factor to be reckoned with; indeed, it would be difficult to conceive a more unfavorable, unresponsive situation in politics, in race, religion and industry and the entire economic sphere than that which confronted the masters of the Sudan twelve years ago this month. Probably it was rather a fortunate circumstance than otherwise that war and plague had more than decimated the population, so that of its eight millions in the former prosperous and populous times, not more by the best accounts than one million and a half were left.

To build an autonomous, self-sustaining state which could pay its own way, finance its own development, and keep step with the world in the march of progress and civilization was a task to daunt the ablest, clearest heads, the ablest hands, and the most unwavering faith. Surround this, too, with the black, heathen hordes from Abyssinia, southwest through Somaliland, British East Africa, the Congo, and so up to the Sahara on the west, a recruiting ground for the slave traders and land pirates, eager to loot and destroy every outpost of civilization, and the problem is certainly one challenging all which is best in the men assigned to its solution, and in the nation which sends them to the front and which stands behind them in the struggle. It is not to the present purpose to inquire in detail how these excellent and beneficial results have been accomplished. One might almost say of the Sudan to-day as Webster of Massachusetts, "There she is; look at her!"

To those who, however, desire to go a little deeper, who would learn from the British experience, who would perhaps be willing to apply to our own island dependencies the lessons which the Sudan readily affords, the careful and intimate study of the records and of the reports is particularly commended. Recognition from the first and to the fullest extent has been accorded to religious faith, to social customs, to racial prejudice; indeed, non-essential differences of every sort have been minimized and everything subordinated to the great work of administering justice, of maintaining order, of promoting education, of extending transportation, of enlarging the area and products of agriculture; in short, of strengthening and stimulating the symmetrical and harmonious growth of the country as a whole.

A handful of European troops has elevated and vitalized the morale of the native until the Sudanese rank and file are the model and the envy of their white allies and instructors; civil servants in all departments are selected with the most exacting care and not only as to their mental and professional qualifications, but to their adaptability to their surroundings; their appreciation of native character and customs and, generally, of their ability to fit into the scheme of

things and work with their native associates, harmoniously and for the common good. It is no small thing to say of the European service, both civil and military, in the Sudan, that the slightest taint of graft or corruption, of star routes, of beef and hay contracts, of padded pay-rolls and other penitentiary practices which have scandalized every one of our own war records, has yet to be discovered.

Apart from the official administration of the Sudan, closely allied to it, under a patronage and with a recognition of which we have, perhaps, no counterpart, are three institutions which have been of the greatest service in the development of the province.

The Gordon Memorial College, of which King Edward was the honorary patron and Lord Kitchener is the president, with trustees representing the best of the empire, and an able, progressive and thoroughly alive corps of instructors, with the Wellcome Research Laboratory, founded and endowed by our own American fellow-citizen, Henry S. Wellcome, has taken a foremost part and has already wrought a mighty work in the civilization of the Sudan. Sharing in the allotment of public funds for education, its contributions not only to the welfare of the province, but to the scientific knowledge of the world, returns manyfold, if it were fitting to speak in such terms, all that it costs. Addressing itself primarily to the immediate problems of sanitation, of physiology, of both human and animal, of soil fertility and of many other topics of practical and direct importance, the work of the college and of the laboratories has been not only of the highest value, measured in dollars and cents to the people of the Sudan, but has taken high rank in the scientific world. No more important, nor creditable annual reports come to the libraries of European and American universities and institutions of research than those from the Gordon College, and when one recalls that the chief surgeon of the Calipha's army contributes an article upon the healing art as practiced by the dervishes, one appreciates, perhaps, as in no other way, that the fighting forces, at least, of a dozen years ago have been thoroughly reconstructed, and when one finds further along many pages of refined chemical analysis and

discussion, with delicate experiments by the Philadelphia professor, William Beam, one learns again the extent of the processes of selection, the breadth of the field from which the talent is drawn, and the large and catholic spirit with which the whole institution is administered. In arts and letters, too, and in manual training also, the college is strong. Classes of the young sheikhs are instructed in civil law, in the traditions of their race and the elements of an English course, that they may return to their native villages and take up professional life and magisterial duties, while forges, pumps and electrical plants, made and installed by the young Arabs, give forcible demonstration of the instruction which they receive and of the promise which they offer to their people.

Later than the Gordon College, but perhaps fully equal to it in its influence and effect upon the province, is the Anglican Church, the efficient and competent head of which, the Bishop of Khartoum, the Rev. Llewellyn H. Gwynne, followed the flag into Omdurman and, remaining from that day to this, has traversed the valley of the Nile from the first cataract almost to its source, and with Khartoum as a centre, established missions and outposts wherever the opportunity offered. Sir Reginald Wingate, far more than an official patron, a sympathetic and energetic co-worker, has aided the Bishop at every point, and to the united efforts of these, a combination of example and of faith which it would be rare, perhaps impossible, to duplicate, the beneficent and enlightened work of the church has been carried steadily forward until magnificent achievement is in sight. Six and a half years ago Princess Henry of Battenburg, laid the cornerstone of the Cathedral in Khartoum; last spring Theodore Roosevelt assisted at the setting of the keystone in one of its arches, and the early completion of this temple of the living God in the heart of this wilderness is assured. The Cathedral and its erection are an excellent illustration and object lesson of the British method in secular as well as religious matters in the Sudan. King Edward, Lords Cromer and Strathcona and many of the foremost Britons have contributed to the Cathedral as a political as much as a religious fact, a demonstration to the Arabs, who have lately com-

pleted in Khartoum the finest mosque in the province, that the Christian also values his religion and, moreover, he plants in the heart of Africa a cathedral which declares his intention to remain a permanent and beneficent presence. No more convincing appeal in the name of Christianity, of law and order, could be made to the Moslems of the Sudan than the stately cathedral will express.

The third collateral and coöperative influence in the restoration of the Sudan is that of the missions, in which we may be proud to say America plays a leading part. The stations of the United Presbyterian Church at Khartoum, at Doleib Hill on the Sobat, just above its junction with the Nile, and at Atbara, where the Nile flows in flood under the bridge of the Philadelphians, are all centres of light and of mercy. Ten thousand medical treatments in a year, even though the total contributions are less than one thousand dollars, and the communicants but one hundred, indicate that the forlorn hope is justifying itself, the faith which it exercised and that which supports it, and the hope that at no distant day the recipients of so much for the body will desire something for the mind and soul. The Austrian Catholic White Fathers, the stations of the English Church Missionary Society are also working similar deeds of beneficence in harmony with each other and with the approval and coöperation of the administration.

It should not be forgotten that the mission question has a political as well as a religious side. No race is more tenacious of its traditions, its dignity, its religion than the Arab, and to attempt to set up openly a rival faith and to propagate it against that entrenched by centuries would be almost certain to bring on the gravest complications and perhaps to unsettle the very foundations of the state and of social order.

As to the Sudan of the future, prophecy is difficult, speculation easy. The review, hasty and imperfect, of the last dozen years, is, perhaps, sufficient to indicate in a general way what is reasonably, practically certain for the future. That the ratio of increase can be kept up is, of course, impossible; but that the province will become prosperous, self-sus-

taining and, perhaps, independent, is wholly within the limits of reasonable expectation. Cotton, equal to that of Egypt, finest in the world; wheat, sugar, tobacco, all these staples are certainly within easy possibility, provided, only, a system of irrigation be developed, while curiously enough, the province of Tokar, last year, exported sufficient maize, our ordinary Indian corn, to supply practically the whole of the Egyptian demand. Should future generations, as those of the past, go down into Egypt for corn, it is quite possible that the dwellers in Tokar and in its vicinity may find an ample market for a crop with which they seem to have had unexpected and most encouraging success.

The trade in gum and in rubber from Kordofan steadily increases; artificial cultivation is in a favorable state of development, while the high ranges of the province are certain, under intelligent development, to produce herds and flocks of all our common domestic animals. The alluvial plains of the White Nile, now covered with scrub and shrub, ranged by the undersized and underbred Shulla and native cattle, can certainly sustain immense droves of far better and finer strains if, indeed, the land be not much more profitably taken up with the tilled crops, for no prairies of the West offer a more inviting or prolific soil. But more important than any of these incidental and local developments, even though they unlock the treasures of the earth and invite and sustain a dense and thriving population are the great, almost colossal works in irrigation, involving engineering achievements of the first magnitude, to which, perhaps, only our Panama canal is comparable. Draining the great swamps of the Bahr el Ghazal, upon which the preliminary work has already begun, means not only the salvation of the Sudan and of Egypt, so far as the water supply is concerned, the saving of three-fourths of the discharge from Lake Victoria now wasted by evaporation, but the uncovering and opening to cultivation of an area as large as the entire State of New York, which must surpass in fertility any of equal size on the face of the globe. For ages, the riotous papyrus has grown and rotted in its shallow waters, and once the light of the sun is allowed to strike the dry land when it shall be uncovered, the

garden spot of the world will be revealed. Then, in the matter of transportation, the draining of the swamps will undoubtedly deepen the channels of the Nile, the railroads will throw off branches, tapping centres of commerce and of industry; the great works at Port Sudan upon which millions of dollars have been expended will be enlarged, the Cape-to-Cairo Railroad will be a fact, and the future of the Sudan will justify the faith and the labor which it has cost.

A sermon as long, even as discursive and superficial as this, warrants in closing an application or two which shall be stated with becoming brevity and modesty. An American Consulate in Khartoum is worth serious and immediate consideration. Britain and Germany control the markets of the Nile Valley, but the demand is for oil, cottons, agricultural implements, sewing machines, typewriters and other tools of civilization, in which we invite the world's competition. The native, erect women of Khartoum bring up on their heads the Blue Nile water in tins once filled with Standard oil, and there is no doubt that the markets are already whitening for the commercial harvest.

An American offering to the building fund of the Anglican Cathedral at Khartoum would be a gracious and profoundly wise act, whether considered from a religious or international point of view. "Let the Englishmen build their own churches, we have demands of our own," is but a narrow, irrational answer. The Christian religion and all its institutions are on trial in Africa, and the task of Great Britain is the white man's, all white men's burden. The day may come when the white race will be glad of the help of the black against the yellow and an American investment in African civilization will be repaid a hundred-fold. The Sudan leads the way in the upward march of the Continent so long dark, toward the light. Progress, to be certain, must be normal; the commercial and the secular, by natural and inevitable law, but precede the intellectual and the religious; and in the fullness of time the redemption of Africa will be complete.